

ALABAMA LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALEA Among Winners of 2022 Community Policing in Action Photo Contest

MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) announced Thursday, Jan. 13, it is one of the 12 winners of a photo contest sponsored by the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office).

The contest, piloted in 2015, has received widespread support from law enforcement agencies for providing a platform for those agencies to share positive interaction with members of their communities.

ALEA Secretary Hal Taylor said, "We are delighted to be among the 2022 contest winners. Our winning submission features a touching moment between a member of the community and an ALEA Trooper utilizing a sensory bag and explaining how all sworn ALEA personnel are now trained to interact with individuals with sensory needs or with invisible disabilities."

The training was offered by KultureCity, a non-profit organization recognized throughout the nation for using its resources to revolutionize and effect change in the community for individuals with such needs. In August 2020, Governor Kay Ivey, joined by Secretary Taylor and KultureCity's founder and CEO Dr. Julian Maha, announced a statewide partnership between ALEA and KultureCity, making ALEA the nation's first state law enforcement agency to train and become sensory-inclusive.

Secretary Taylor said, "We are committed to continuously improving our current operations and our overall interactions with all citizens, our recent partnership with KultureCity is a testament to that commitment. We are proud that ALEA is once more in the national spotlight for enhancing future interactions between law enforcement and the community to create the best outcomes."

During the fall of 2021, the COPS Office invited state, local, territorial and tribal law enforcement agencies to submit one photo that best depicts community policing in action. More than 280 agencies participated in the competition, with 12 winners: ALEA and Lafayette Parish (La.) Sheriff's Office, along with the Police Departments of Cincinnati, Ohio; Egg Harbor

Township, N.J.; Elgin, Ill.; Ewing, N.J.; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Norfolk, Va.; Santa Clara, Calif.; Spearfish, S.D.; Sylva, N.C; and Woodland, Calif.

The 12 winning photos will be featured on the <u>COPS Office website</u>, as well as on the COPS Office's official <u>Twitter</u> profile and <u>Facebook</u> page, for one month each during the 2022 calendar year. In addition, the winning agencies will be featured in monthly articles in the COPS Office enewsletter, the <u>Community Policing Dispatch</u>. The winning photos from this year and prior years can be viewed on the COPS Office's <u>Photo Contest</u> page and in its <u>Photo Galleries</u>.